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INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 000662

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KUALA LUMPUR FOR JASON DONOVAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/04/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [SN](#)  
SUBJECT: DEPUTY COUNTERTERRORISM COORDINATOR FEIERSTEIN  
TALKS REGIONAL EFFORTS AND CONCERNS WITH GOS

Classified By: CDA Daniel L. Shields. Reasons 1.4(b)(d).

¶1. (C) Deputy Counterterrorism Coordinator Gerald Feierstein thanked the Government of Singapore (GOS) for its cooperation on the Global War on Terror (GWOT) and encouraged improved information sharing in meetings with the Internal Security Department and the Security and Intelligence Division on June ¶4.

¶2. (C) Senior counterterrorism analyst Jeanie Tan of the Internal Security Department (ISD) said the February escape of Mas Selamat Kastari was a setback. But she noted that ISD is far more concerned about the problem of self-radicalization from the Internet and cited two recent examples of young Muslims in Singapore who planned to join terrorist cells elsewhere. The GOS believes that in both cases, the process of self-radicalization started when the suspects clicked on links to jihadist websites from non-mainstream news websites. In both cases, the suspects were practicing Muslims, but did not have the religious training to counteract the misinterpretations they found on the jihadist websites.

¶3. (C) Ms. Tan assessed the regional CT situation as good, but described addressing terrorism in the region as an "uphill task." She noted two recent incidents that could indicate the re-establishment of connections between Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian terror cells. Two Jordanians arrested in the Philippines in February and suspected of being part of an Al-Qa'ida terrorist cell that had plotted to bomb several Western embassies in Manila, including the U.S. Embassy. In late March, two senior JI leaders were detained in Malaysia and deported to Indonesia. The two were on their way to Syria, then potentially to Iraq, looking for logistic and financial support for operations in Southeast Asia. Ng Kah Ming of the Security and Intelligence Division at the Ministry of Defense speculated on a possible Riyadh-Manila connection, given the number of Filipino workers in Saudi Arabia and the value of their remittances to the Philippines.

¶4. (C) Ms. Tan expressed concern about possible growth of terrorist cells in Bangladesh. She opined that as relations between India and Pakistan improve, Bangladesh could serve as a "back door" for extremists. The GOS is particularly apprehensive of such an outcome given the high numbers of Bangladeshi workers in Singapore and other countries in the region. Ms. Tan highlighted that terrorism in Bangladesh might not remain solely a South Asian problem, but could spread to Southeast Asia as well. The GOS has some exchanges and intelligence sharing with Bangladesh and will continue to improve these mechanisms. Ms. Tan suggested that the USG could help by funding training and capacity building for privately run madrasahs in Bangladesh.

¶5. (U) PDAS Feierstein did not have the opportunity to clear

this message.

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